

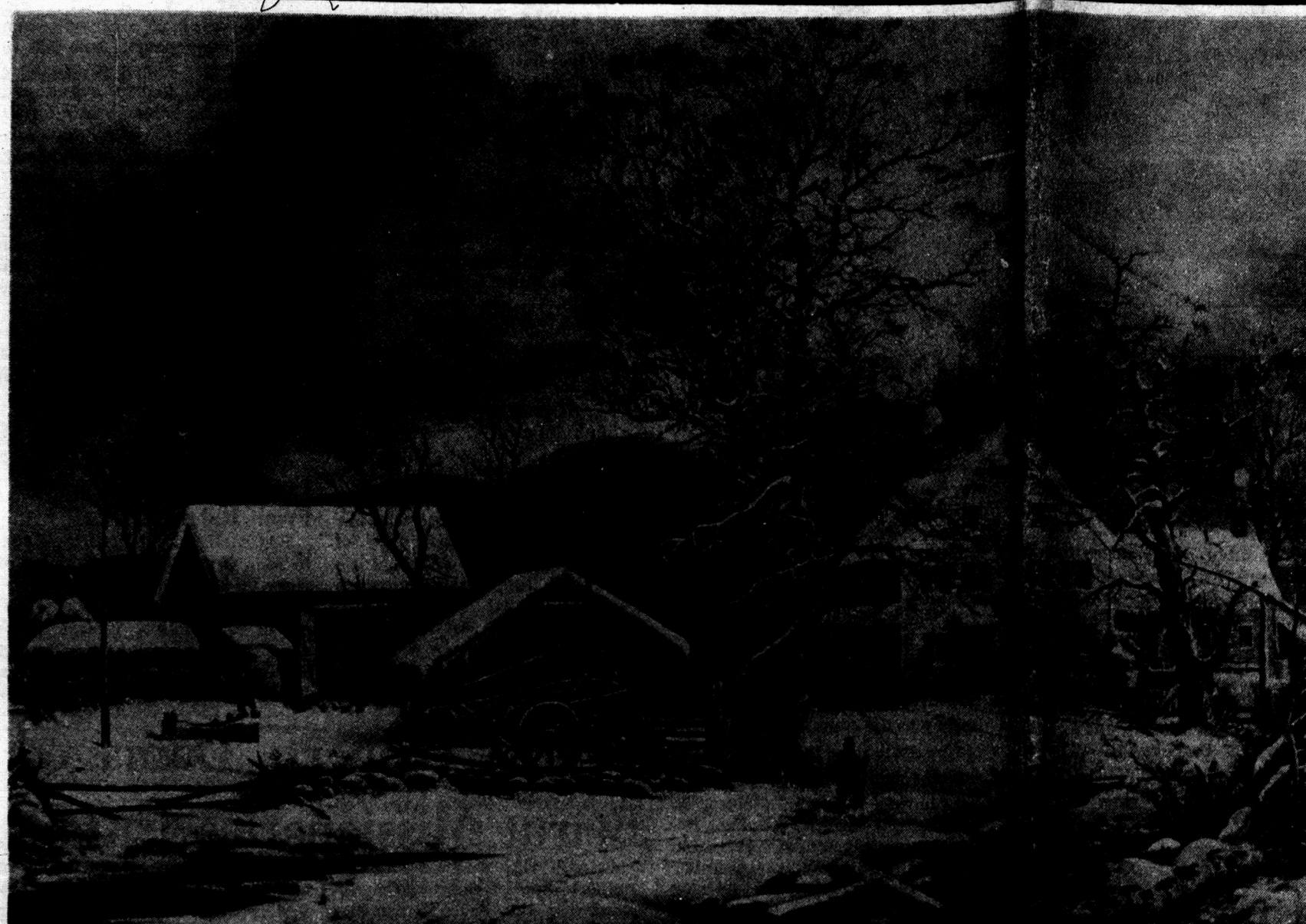
The Baptist Record

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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HOME FOR CHRISTMAS! "Clap hands, you people! A Son has been given . . . This is our festival, this we celebrate, God coming to man that man might go out (or better, go back) to God our Father . . . Let us keep the feast not popularly but in a holy way . . . not our affair but as his, our Lord's . . ."—Gregory of Nazianzus (Currier and Ives print, photo by RNS)

265 Foreign Mission Appointments Set Record

RICHMOND (BP) — The appointment of 18 missionaries in December pushed the 1975 total to an all-time, one-year record of 265 missionary appointments by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The previous record year, 1969, recorded 261 appointments. This year's total includes 134 career missionaries, 29 missionary associates, 80 missionary journeymen (a two year program for young college graduates), 20 reappointments and two special project nurses.

"To my knowledge, this is the largest number of missionaries sent out in one year by an evangelical Christian group," said Louis R. Cobbs, secretary for the board's department of missionary personnel. "This (the sending of missionaries) is one of the best expressions of New Testament Christianity found among Southern Baptists today."

Executive Secretary Baker J. Cauthen, in his report to the board, expressed support and appreciation for the missionaries remaining in Beirut, Lebanon.

"The missionaries in Beirut have been through many weeks of

danger and stress," he said. "They have been assured repeatedly of the board's readiness to back their decision concerning coming away or staying. Each person is there by his own sense of direction. Their presence is of great significance, and we praise God that they have been spared any injury."

Latest reports from Missionary James K. Ragland in Beirut indi-

cate the western part of the city, where he lives, is noisy "like World War II." He said though the situation is critical the missionaries who remain in Beirut have avoided injury.

In other action during its December meeting, the board approved a plan for a subscription drive for The Commission magazine, named an interim secretary for missionary education, appor-

portioned \$70,000 for world relief and heard a report from a board-appointed coordinating committee assigned to compile the work of 13

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Board Appoints Dr., Mrs. Shepard To Portugal

RICHMOND, Va. — Rev. and Mrs. Samuel G. (Sam) Shepard were among 18 missionaries appointed by the Foreign Mission Board at its December meeting, held here recently. They were employed as missionary associates and expect to be assigned to Portugal where he will be a theology teacher.

They are living in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., where he has been pastor of Wilton Manors Baptist Church for four years and she is a teacher.

Shepard was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where his parents were Southern Baptist missionar-

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The Members and Employees of THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION BOARD

Extend to All of Our Readers

Best Wishes for a
Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year

Local Church Importance In Evangelism Underscored

By Toby Druin

CLEARWATER, Fla. (BP) — The strategic place of the local congregation in evangelism was underscored here in the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board evangelism section's annual meeting with directors of evangelism of state Baptist conventions.

A new strategy unveiled by the evangelism section for "growing an evangelistic church" and addresses by a nationally known pastor and a church growth specialist stressed the importance of the local church in winning America to Christ.

C. B. Hogue, director of the evangelism section, told the state directors that the new strategy is a process using events and experiences with an ultimate objective of growing an evangelistic church and helping the church "fulfill its bold mission."

Basically, the strategy, to be incorporated in a booklet and provided to Southern Baptist pastors, builds a foundation for evangel-

ism through presentation of a theology of evangelism and sharing of the vision of winning persons to Christ with the pastor and people.

The strategy calls for equipping church members for evangelism by helping them to grow to spiri-

Commission Issues Bicentennial Call To Prayer

The Christian Action Commission is calling upon Mississippi Baptists for a special prayer emphasis to usher in the Bicentennial year, according to Dr. J. Clark Hensley, executive director.

Dr. Hensley said, "Prayer is never out of place for Christian citizens. In visiting our churches and listening to prayers by radio and television, I have found a noticeable lack of praying for our nation and of remembering significant groups in our national life. Seldom do you hear a prayer for peace and for the governing authorities; and when have you heard a prayer for enemies and those who have despitely used us? Not all will be pleased by the specifics mentioned in the call to prayer, and many others could be added, but it is hoped that churches and individual Baptists will take kindly to and heed most of the suggestions."

"A call to repentance for prayerlessness and the limited scope of our praying is not mentioned, but if we would really commit ourselves to the Lordship of Christ, as suggested in the last paragraph, most of us would find ourselves in a spirit of repentance for sins of omission, as well as commission."

"It is hoped," Dr. Hensley concluded, "that special prayers following at least some of the suggestions will be made in Watch Night services or on the first Sunday of the New Year."

The text of the statement issued by the Commission follows:

A Bicentennial Call To Prayer

As we begin the observance of the Bicentennial year, the Christian Action Commission would call to prayer the Baptist

(Continued on page 2)

CBS Chooses Church As Bicentennial Program Site

PROVIDENCE, R. I. (BP) — CBS-TV has chosen The First Baptist Church in America as site for a special Bicentennial Christmas Eve Cantata at 12:00 midnight (EST).

The premier performance, written especially for the celebration to open the Bicentennial year, was composed by Ezra Laderman and Joe Darion. "The story relates to the period of our 200-year history and is based on finding a gift wor-

thy to offer God," a church spokesman said.

Principles from the Metropolitan and New York City Opera Companies will perform the leading roles. The chorus will be supplemented by local talent.

The First Baptist Church in America was founded in Providence, R. I., by Roger Williams in 1633. The present Meeting House was built in 1775 and its bicentennial is being celebrated this year.

Dr. Pleitz Of Pensacola To Speak, Youth Night

Dr. James L. Pleitz, who will be the inspirational speaker for the Mississippi Baptist Youth Night Dec. 29, is an Arkansas native who held pastorates in that state before assuming his present pastorate at First Church Pensacola, Fla.

He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark., and was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Bentonville and the Grand Avenue Church, Fort Smith, Arkansas.

He is also a graduate of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Pleitz is immediate past president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference and has been president of the Florida Baptist Pastor's Conference. He has been president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission and of the Florida Baptist

Convention. He has been chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

Other out-of-state program personalities for Youth Night are the Stone Brothers from Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. They are a vocal and instrumental trio with trumpets.

Some 10,000 young people from across Mississippi are expected to attend the program. They will also hear Rita Wood, Jackson's Junior Miss, in a special vocal presentation and organist Chuck Endsley of William Carey College and pianist Steve Roddy of Auburn University.

A 20-minute organ and piano prelude will begin at 6:30 p.m. and precede the program, which will begin at 6:50 p.m. The theme is "Mississippi Baptist Youth . . . God's Instrument for America."

MC Breaks Ground For New Academic Complex

Mississippi College broke ground for still another academic complex Thursday afternoon, December 11, as the 150 year old institution continues its march in providing new academic offerings

and expanded curriculum opportunities for students the world over.

A host of faculty, staff, trustees and student body representatives took shovels to turn over some dirt to mark the official beginning of the one-story School of Nursing - Home Economics Building which will house those two expanding areas of the college's academic offerings.

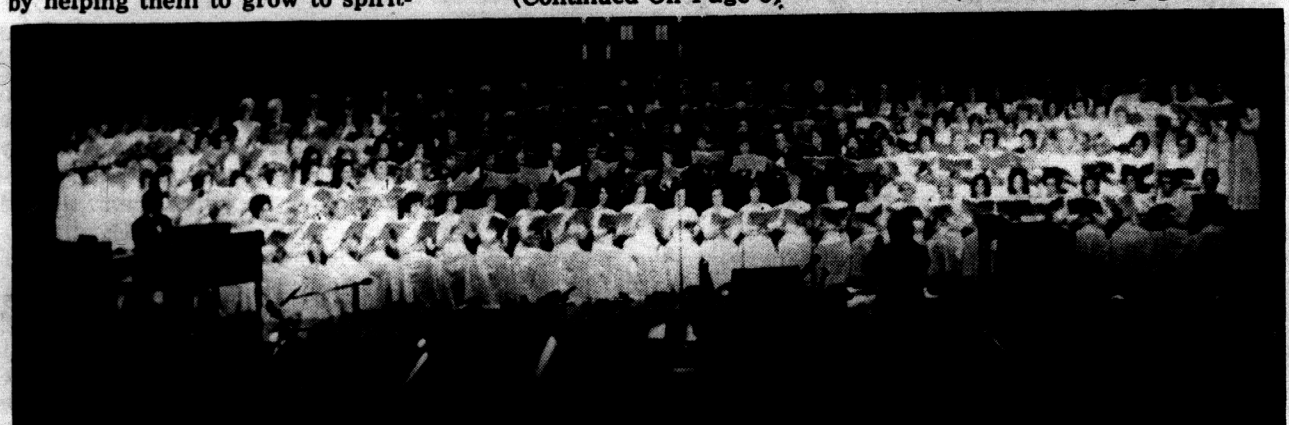
The dirt turning came following a welcome by Dr. Charles E. Martin, vice-president for academic affairs; introductions by Dr. Lewis Nobles, president of the college; and statements concerning their areas by Dr. Frances McGuffee, head of the department of home economics and Mrs. Marion Bassett, dean of the School of Nursing.

(Continued on page 2)



Two Historic Checks

Two checks arriving the same week in early December brought smiles to personnel at the Baptist Convention Board. One was the check which brought the Cooperative Program receipts for 1975 to \$6,000,000. Fittingly it came from one of the convention's oldest churches, Galilee, J. Millard Purl, pastor, in Mississippi Association. The other check brought the convention's 1975 receipts to more than \$10,000,000. It was from Parkhill Baptist Church, Joe Stovall, pastor in Jackson. In both categories these are the largest amounts ever reached in one year by the convention. Shown rejoicing together over the new peaks in giving are A. L. Nelson, Business Manager-Comptroller; Mrs. Clyde E. Nettles, Chief Accountant; Dr. Earl Kelly, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, and John Alexander, Director of Stewardship and Cooperative Program Promotion. The total Cooperative Program budget for 1975 is \$6,600,000 and leaders believe that that goal will be reached by Dec. 31. Church treasurers are urged to send in their checks for December immediately after the last Sunday, which will be Dec. 28. The books will be closed on December 31.



"CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT"—The sixth annual presentation of "Carols by Candlelight" will be presented by the Sanctuary Choir and orchestra of First Church, Jackson on Sunday, December 21 at 4:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. in the church sanctuary. The choir and orchestra will be directed by Larry

Black, minister of music. This popular Christmas event begins with a candlelight processional of the 224 member Sanctuary Choir and concludes with the choir, congregation and orchestra singing Malotte's "Lord's Prayer."



Prints published by Currier and Ives (Photos RNS)



Commission Issues Bicentennial Call To Prayer

(Continued from page 1)

people of our state, suggesting:

That we give thanks to God for the heritage of freedom we enjoy in this nation and invoke His blessings upon us that we may properly observe the Bicentennial;

That we hold in grateful remembrance those of our forebears who have defended our liberties by life or influence and pray especially for those of our peers who are suffering physical pain, disability or mental torment as a result of their response to our nation's call to defense;

That we pray for those yet missing in action from the Vietnam conflict and for their families and pray for some miracle of intervention on their behalf;

That we pray for those who are still oppressed and deprived of freedom to exercise religious liberty in expression and worship;

That we pray for those who have suffered isolation or imprisonment for their conscience sake because of war;

That we pray God will help us to be a peace-loving and peace-keeping people and that to this end He will give guidance to our President, the Congress and all those who make policy for us as a people;

That we pray for those defenders of the faith yet living in our communities, many in rest homes or shut in, who through sacrificial service through our churches have contributed to our personal heritage of freedom to worship and serve God; and

That in our joy in nostalgic gratitude, we may not fail to make a fresh commitment as Christian citizens to live under the Lordship of Christ.

Fires Evict Grants

From Raleigh Home

RALEIGH, N. C. (BP)—Back-to-back fires over the weekend of Nov. 29-30 extensively damaged the home of J. Marse Grant, editor of the Biblical Record, state news publication of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Baptist Property Damaged; Beirut Missionaries Unhurt

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP)—Southern Baptist missionaries remaining in this violence-torn city are still uninjured, though a Baptist church and a missionaries' apartment have been damaged in two separate bombings.

The A & P Store across the street from the apartment of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Trimble was bombed, and damage was done to the front of their apartment, according to James K. Ragland, missionary in Beirut. The Trimbles

were in the back of the house at the time and were not hurt. They had recently returned to Lebanon from a brief evacuation to Jordan.

The Baptist church in Tripoli, North of Beirut, was bombed on a recent Friday evening. Doors and windows were damaged. No one was injured.

The Baptist seminary is still open, and no Baptist-owned mission property has been seriously damaged. The Baptist school opened for a few days, then closed again.

Ragland reported the western part of the city, where the Baptist school is located and where he lives, is noisy, "like World War II" and "things are quite critical." Ragland urged prayer for the missionaries in Beirut.

Missionaries remaining in Beirut are the Finlay Grahams, the David Kings, William O. Hern, the Trimbles and Ragland, plus two volunteers, Miss Isabelle McLelland and Mrs. Ann Pfander.

Christmas Time

Christmas time! That man must be a misanthrope indeed, in whose breast something like a jovial feeling is not roused—in whose mind some pleasant associations are not awakened—by the recurrence of Christmas. There are people who will tell you that Christmas is not to them what it used to be.

Never heed such dismal reminiscences.

Dwell not upon the past.

Reflect upon your present blessing—of which every man has many—not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some. Our life on it but your Christmas shall be merry, and your new year a happy one!

—Charles Dickens

HMB Elects Staffers, Missionaries

ATLANTA (BP)—Three staff positions were filled and 24 missionaries and missionary associates appointed by Southern Baptist Home Mission Board directors meeting here.

Staff members elected were



Van N. Nichols of Tucker, Ga., to the new position of controller; Phillip B. Jones, a data technician at the board, as research consultant in the planning section; and Hal Woods of Clarksville, Ga., as recruitment coordinator for the board's Christian Service Corps.

Six missionaries were appointed, including Don Johnson of Decatur, Ga., the first black consultant in evangelism for the evangelism section.

Johnson, a native of Paducah, Ky., has been distribution secretary for the Atlanta office of the American Bible Society since

1973. He is a graduate of American Baptist College of the Bible in Nashville and has a master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary.

The other missionaries appointed were Philip and Doris Tilden of Rialto, Calif., to serve as consultant to churches in transitional communities in California; Robert and Barbara Pollan of Louisville, as director of Christian social ministries for Chicago Metro Baptist Association; and Eddie Mabry of Decatur, Ill., who will be a regional missionary in Oklahoma for the department of cooperative ministries with National

Baptists.

Seventeen missionary associates were appointed, 10 for language missions, four for rural-urban missions, two in church extension and the other for work with the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, affiliated with the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.

NASSAU, Bahamas — The new library at the Bahamas Baptist Bible Institute here is now 250 books richer thanks to Bethany Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N. C. When R. Herman Kitchen, Bethany's minister of outreach, and Charlie Turner, a member of the church, took a mission tour to Nassau, they saw a need they could help with. The church began to pray for the work here, Mr. and Mrs. Paul D. Early who are Southern Baptist missionaries stationed here from Winston-Salem, and the need for books in the library. The result was "Operation Booklift" headed by Bethany's Woman's Missionary Union where the church contributed the 250 books.

At Work In Uruguay

Dona Ramona Rubido and her ninety year old husband are now one in Christ. For years, Dona Ramona rode two buses some thirty minutes alone across the city of Montevideo, Uruguay, in order to attend church. Her husband was not a believer. In March, 1971, she offered her 15 x 18 foot living room as a place for worship services. It was my privilege to direct those services. There are now four Sunday School classes meeting in three different homes. Over 80 people have been reached in one way or another. Seventeen have been baptized and others are awaiting baptism. The first person to make a profession of faith in Christ was Don Juan, Dona Ramona's husband.

This all came about when Dona Ramona quit leaving her home and "barrio" (neighborhood) to worship and instead brought the worship experience into her own home. Through the Cooperative Program, Baptists in the States made it possible for a missionary pastor to minister in this neighborhood.

This small but growing congregation shows its thanks to God for what it has received by actively participating with other Baptists of Uruguay by winning their own people. The first item in their budget is 10 percent for mission work in Uruguay.

Mack P. Jones
Montevideo, Uruguay

Southern Baptists Sponsor 2,652 Refugees

ATLANTA (BP)—By Christmas morning, 1975, almost all of the 130,000 refugees who fled South Vietnam in the waning days of the war last April will have found new homes in the United States.

Refugee camps at Fort Chaffee, Ark., and Indiantown Gap, Pa., both were scheduled to close in mid-December, according to spokesmen at the camps. The refugee population on Dec. 1 was below 7,000—about 5,000 at Fort Chaffee and around 750 at Indiantown Gap—and was being decreased by about 300 persons each day, they said.

Jerry Edwards, project director for the Southern Baptist sponsorship effort at Fort Chaffee, said sponsorship cases probably were to be completed by Dec. 10, and that all refugees were to be with their sponsors by Dec. 20.

The Southern Baptist office at Fort Chaffee for the last few remaining weeks had more sponsors than refugees. Most of the remaining refugees, either by

their preference or the capriciousness of the original assignments, have been handled by the United States Catholic Conference, one of several sponsoring agencies.



PAINTING by Dale Nichols (American, 1904-1938). Art, Arthur H. Hearn Fund, 1938. (RNS Photo)

Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art

MC Breaks Ground

(Continued from page 1)

Participating in the groundbreaking were Dr. Nobles, Dr. McGuffee, Mrs. Bassett; Dr. and Mrs. William B. Cockroft of Memphis, on behalf of the friends of Mississippi College; W. D. Lofton, Brookhaven, vice-president of the college's Board of Trustees; Harry Vickery, Greenville, president of the Alumni Association and also a trustee; and Eddie Graves, Ripley, president of the Student Body Association.



Mississippi College broke ground Thursday for the new School of Nursing-Home Economics Building to house those two academic areas of the college. Participating in the actual dirt turning were, from the left, Eddie Graves, Ripley, president of the Student Body Association; Harry Vickery, Greenville, president of the Alumni Association and a trustee; W. D. Lofton, Brookhaven, vice-chairman of the Board of Trustees; Mrs. Marion Bassett, dean of the School of Nursing; Mrs. W. B. Cockroft, Memphis, Tenn.; Dr. W. B. Cockroft, Memphis, Tenn., principal donor; and Dr. Lewis Nobles, president of the college. (M. C. Photo by Ronnie Killebrew)

Opening and closing prayers were given by Dr. John G. McCall, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Vicksburg, and Dr. Howard Aultman, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Columbia. They are both trustees of the college.

The School of Nursing-Home Economics Building will be located on the northwest corner of College and Capitol Streets and is the first of several construction projects contemplated during the 150th anniversary celebration.

(Continued from page 1)

strategy study groups into one document. The "Subscription Promotion Growth Plan," suggested by a professional consulting firm for the board's educational and promotional journal. The Commission projects that the total paid subscriptions should reach 75,000 by Dec. 31, 1977. Complimentary copies would push total circulation to more than 100,000. The magazine currently has about 29,000 paid subscribers.

G. Norman Price, associate secretary for publications in the board's department of missionary education, was named interim secretary for the department. He will temporarily replace Eugene L. Hill who retires Dec. 31. The interim post is expected to last four to six months until a replacement is named.

Of December's relief appropriations, \$30,000 goes to Kenya, including \$10,000 for drought relief and \$20,000 for well-digging projects. A total of \$40,000 received from the Ahmanson Foundation was appropriated for relief in Bangladesh due to the special interest of the donor in the needs of that country.

The final report of the coordinating committee concerning "bold new plans" for foreign missions for the next 25 years, will

Board Appoints

(Continued from page 1)

ies. Later they moved to New Orleans, La. Shepard was graduated from Furman University. He has done further studies at Duke University School of Law and Mississippi State University. He was graduated from Southern Seminary, with doctor of theology degree.

He has been pastor of several churches, including First Church, Tupelo, Miss., and Little River Church, Miami, Fla.

Mrs. Shepard, the former Charlotte Green, was born in Ogbomsho, Nigeria, where her parents were medical missionaries. She attended high school in Danville, Va. She was graduated from Meredith College, and did further study at Woman's Missionary Union Training School (now merged with Southern seminary). She has taught school in Tupelo, and Miami.

They have two grown children.

be discussed in detail during the board's January meeting. Pending approval by the board, the report will then be presented to the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee and finally to the full convention during annual session in June in Norfolk, Virginia.

Medical receptorships, an arrangement in which the board provides short-term overseas opportunities for qualified medical students, were awarded to Miss J. Carol Daniels and Paul J. Boone, students at the University of Texas

as Medical Branch, Galveston, Tex.; and Miss Marcia L. Bender, University of Louisville (Ky.).

Appointed as career missionaries were Mr. and Mrs. Robert B. (Bob) Barker from Missouri and Texas, assigned to Venezuela; Mr. and Mrs. Fred E. Day, Louisiana and Alabama, to Surinam, Mr. and Mrs. Orville Boyd Jenkins, Oklahoma and Arkansas, to East Africa; and Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. (Bob) Williamson, Alabama, to Rhodesia.

Appointed as missionary associates were Mr. and Mrs. Carl W. Bechtold from Michigan and Texas, assigned to Liberia; Mr. and Mrs. David G. Bradford, Texas and Illinois, to Korea; and Mr. and Mrs. Durward H. Davis, Florida and Michigan, to Germany.

Also, Mr. and Mrs. Fred C. Ladd, Oklahoma, to the Philippines; and Mr. and Mrs. Samuel G. (Sam) Shepard, Brazil and Nigeria, to Portugal. The Shepards are former Mississippians.

It takes emergencies to bring out the true character of all.

Keep cool in your arguments by sticking to the cold facts.



Dr. and Mrs. Shepard

265 FMB Appointments Set Record



WINTER HAS LEFT A DUSTING OF SNOW on this rural scene near Catonsville, Maryland. (RNS Photo)

Seminary Makes Sense, Says Missionary Couple

By Tim Nicholas

MONTPELIER, Vt. (BP) — David and Becky Waugh dropped out of seminary — temporarily — to see what they were missing.

A year ago, the couple left The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville to staff the only Southern Baptist work in Montpelier. (Becky is from Jackson, Miss.)

Now, they are much more aware of the need for seminary courses like clinical pastoral education (CPE) and church administration, among others. The two planned all along to return to Southern Seminary in the fall, 1976, so they were already convinced that a seminary education had worth.

The Waughs were interested in pioneer and volunteer ministries, especially at this stage in their lives "where we could do it at ease," said Mrs. Waugh. So they applied to the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's (HMB) US-2 program (two year mission program for college graduates) but found nothing they felt suited them.

So they kept looking and praying. Then they ran into Quentin Lockwood of the HMB's church extension department. Lockwood told them that many ministers have problems in pioneer areas (a term often applied to areas where Southern Baptist work is still relatively young or not real strong), particularly if not well prepared, and many move away after a couple of years. Then he offered the Waughs an internship in a pioneer area.

They ended up in Montpelier for a two-year internship as missionary associates.

Now as staff members of Montpelier Baptist Chapel, they both feel they made a wise decision to become interns. They are getting experience and training they feel will help in determining where they will go after seminary graduation.

The Waughs replaced a US-2 couple, Bill and Linda Gaddis, who were already graduates of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif., and are now missionaries in Indonesia.

The Waughs' supervisor, Meryn Borders, veteran Vermont missionary, edged out of the Montpelier work as the couple became more experienced. It is hard work, but they like it.

Their work consists not only of pastoral duties for the 50-member chapel, but there are Bible studies in a Montpelier nursing home and a retirement apartment house in nearby Barre. Waugh also leads home Bible studies in nearby Waterbury and Plainfield.

"We take the church where the people are," says Waugh, a Wake Forest University graduate from Burlington, N. C.

Waugh credits Eddie Smith, a short-term or "semester" missionary here from January to June, 1975 for the youths' turning out in Plainfield. Smith also worked in Stowe, Vt., a ski resort town in a ski season ministry for which the Waughs are now responsible.

Mrs. Waugh leads a mothers' club in the chapel, an organization that actually "began independently of the church through the local school system. Many teenaged unwed mothers had mothers who felt guilty about their daughters. The school system got these older mothers together for group support but lost state funding," says the young missionary-wife who is a Vanderbilt University graduate.

Several churches in the area coordinate a food closet for needy

families, which operates in the chapel. In the last year, Waugh said 280 families each received a week's supply of food.

"I operate a transient lodging and ministry in the chapel," said Waugh. "People hear of it through the government centers and where teens hang out in town. It's a place to get a shower, a bed, maybe a meal and counseling."

The chapel has a Sunday school class for mentally and emotionally disturbed children from Vermont State Hospital. Members pick the children up and take them to the chapel.

Now the Waughs are already a little older and wiser, with a lot more experience. Their seminary work has taken on new meaning and worth. And they are more confident of making wiser choices careerwise, they say, upon graduation.

Good Hope To Show "The Gospel Road"

Good Hope Church in Camden (Hinds-Madison) will show the Billy Graham film "The Gospel Road" on New Year's Eve at 6 p.m. The movie star is popular singer and spokesman for Christ, Johnny Cash. There is no admission charge; however, a love offering will be taken for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Assn. Rev. Walt Grayson is pastor.



David and Becky Waugh visit the Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, Vermont. Waugh, who ministers in the Montpelier area, has a ministry in the town of Stowe. (BP photo by Tim Nicholas, HMB)

Farrow Manor Campus: New Children's Village Ministry

By Paul N. Nunnery
Superintendent Baptist Children's Village

We have just commenced operations on our new branch campus near Independence, in Tate County.

Everyone at The Village is pleased and thankful to note the warm and sincere expressions of interest in this bold new venture and in the boys and girls whom we have transferred from our Jackson campus to become the first residents of Farrow Manor campus. It is the latest addition to The Village's growing child care facilities and ministries — providing Mississippi Baptist child care with another dimension and resource — safe and attractive country living for children and young people who prefer a rural setting, and whose needs can best be served in this environment.

We know that some old friends of The Children's Village, and

many new friends of our children may be somewhat uncertain and even confused in their efforts to help and become involved with our Farrow Manor campus group. Except for our Satellite Home in New Albany, this is the first time in our history that an "out-of-Jackson" group care facility has been attempted by The Baptist Children's Village. Every new venture must undergo a period of adjustment and exercise diligence in keeping its friends — old and new — advised, as it charts a new course and "feels its way."

We acknowledge, with gratitude and respect, our valued affiliation with and dependence upon our Christian friends who comprise Farrow Manor, Inc., the private corporation which owns the lands and buildings upon which our branch campus in Tate County is located. By agreement, and without charge to The Village, they allow us to use 55 acres of

these lands for a child care campus. Without them and the investment they have made, there would be no Children's Village operation in Tate County.

We do believe that it is important for Village friends, especially Baptist churches and their organizations, to remember that the struggling, but growing, children's home campus which you see and read about on the Farrow, Manor property is a part of THE BAPTIST CHILDREN'S VILLAGE, an official agency of Mississippi Baptist Convention. Children and staff living there are Village children and staff. Every penny of operating expense from utility bills to salaries, food and clothing for children and the multitude of other financial burdens which any child care operation must bear, it being paid and will continue to be paid by The Baptist Children's Village from its Jackson offices — as long as the

Souther Memorial Fund Established

A memorial fund in the name of Dr. Mildred Curtis Souther had been established at New Orleans Seminary. The fund, established by order of the Executive committee of the Board of Trustees, will be used to furnish the planned addition to the seminary's pre-school education center.

Dr. Mildred Souther was director of the pre-school center and associated with the department of Childhood Education at the seminary for over 15 years.

Contributions to the Souther Memorial Fund should be made through the office of Dr. Russell McIntire, Director of Development, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 3939 Gentilly Blvd. New Orleans, Louisiana 70126.

Christmas

C is for the Christ Child who came into the world two thousand years ago.

H is for His Heavenly Home, that He gave up to come to this sinful world below.

R is for the Resurrection of Christ after He died on the cross for you and me.

I is for Immanuel, which means "God with us," as with His children He will always be.

S is the Sin that you and I have committed, that Christ paid for on the cross.

T is the Truth that God reveals to us through His son, when he see ourselves as lost.

Now the first six letters in Christmas make the most important word spoken.

But the next three letters are very important, and from the word Christmas, should never be broken.

For Christ came into the world that we.

M Might
A All be
S Saved.

What a wonderful word CHRISTMAS! Betty Pickens Brown

Tanner Riley Accepts Position In Arkansas

Rev. Tanner Riley, who has been minister of music for the First Church, Clinton for nine years, will become pastor of music ministries of University Baptist Church in Fayetteville, Ark., on Jan. 1.

A graduate of Mississippi College and Southwestern Seminary, Riley moved to Clinton from Highland Church, Meridian.

During his Clinton tenure, he has carried on a full music program that now includes eight choirs, two of Mississippi College students, several ensembles and four bell choirs.

Special programs have been presented annually by both the adult and youth choirs and there have been retreats for each. The youth choirs have made summer tours that have included mission work activities in other states.

A church-wide reception for Mr. and Mrs. Riley has been planned by the Clinton church for Sunday, Dec. 21, following the evening worship hour.

Rock Hill Plans

Dec. 21 Cantata

Rock Hill Church, Route 2, Brandon, will present their Christmas Cantata on Sunday, December 21, at 7 p.m. Tommy Sparkman, minister of music, will direct the program.

Rev. Robert Jones, pastor, states that the public is invited.

Thursday, December 18, 1975

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 3

This, Too, Is Christmas—When The Children Laugh

This, too, is Christmas. A time for joy and laughter and awe for the little people of the American family. But it is not Christmas if the children do not share in the retelling of the miracle of Bethlehem, the coming of the Christ child.



THE MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS (RNS Photo)



HEADING HOME, two tots walk into the afternoon Sunday after a day's fun in the snow. (RNS Photo)



DREAMLAND — Hand in hand, a brother and sister sleep and dream about the gifts they hope to find under the Christmas tree in the morning. — (RNS Photo)



THE LITTLE GIRL'S JOY is not whole unless she knows or is reminded of her greatest Gift. — (RNS Photo)



BROKEN ANGEL — With a black eye, broken tooth, and one arm in a cast, seven-year-old Cheryl Biggley of Hamilton, Ontario, looks anything but angelic. Cheryl, an angel in the school pageant, was in a car accident. — (RNS Photo)



HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Jesus! (Home Board Photo)

(Continued On Page 6)

The Baptist Record

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

EDITORIAL

Christmas In America

As America moves along in its bicentennial year it has come to its 200th observance of Christmas since the nation's birth.

All nations of the world where Christianity has reached observe Christmas. In those lands where the Christian influence long has been strong, as in Europe, Christmas has become a traditional part of the nation's life, and has been that for many centuries. In other lands, where Christianity is a minority group, Christmas observance usually is only in the churches and in Christian homes.

For Americans, Christmas is a major event, and long has been that. First settlers brought the observance with them from England, and there are references to a Christmas dinner on the Mayflower. Both Captain John Smith and William Bradford mention the day in their journals. Puritanism looked with disfavor on any Christmas observance other than worship in the churches, yet it seems evident that the event grew as a time of feasting and fellowship with friends. Traditions such as carols, trees, and Saint Nicholas came much later, but it is clear that Christmas was a part of colonial life, and that it was observed in the early days of the nation.

In the nineteenth century Christmas became more and more a part of the life of the people with varied traditions in the different sections of the nation. Longfellow speaks of it in one of his great poems now made into a song, written in the midst of the civil war. "I heard the bells on Christmas day; their old familiar carols play . . ." and other references make us know that the day meant much to our fathers. And

who can forget the New York City newspaper editorial, "Yes Virginia, There Is A Santa Claus?"

The twentieth century saw Christmas come into full flower as a part of American life. Books, magazines, poems, and other materials tell us of the growth of the importance of the observance.

Moreover, no matter what was happening to the nation, Christmas always came. It came in the days of World War II, and there are dramatic stories of how fighting stopped and carols were sung in the trenches of France in 1917, with friend and foe alike joining in the observance.

One of the unforgettable stories of World War II was told in Reader's Digest. In a dark hour of the war, perhaps Christmas 1943, a large part of the Pacific fleet was assembled in a great harbor, with many ships anchored close to one another. On Christmas eve, the Digest said, an individual or a group on one of the ships began to sing a Christmas carol. The sound carried across the waters to neighboring craft and others joined in. Soon tens of thousands of men on the many ships were on the decks, lifting their voices together in what was called "the greatest carol sing of history." Christmas united the hearts of lonely men far away from home.

A current periodical carries a chapter from one of the books written by one of the men who was a POW in North Vietnam. This chapter relates how these men in the loneliness and suffering of the "Hanoi Hilton," found themselves warmed and encouraged as they thought of families at home on Christmas. They knew that at that moment their loved ones were thinking of and praying for them.

Christmas means that much to almost all Americans, so the nation finds joy and gladness in its return each year. And it always does return. In days of war and in days of peace in days of prosperity and in days of depression, Christmas comes. The blessing and excitement of the season depends not upon how much money one has to spend, but upon the love and joy and fellowship and happiness which it brings.

In this modern day, when most of us have so much, and when we have radio, television and printed advertising, along with the great trade centers and mail order catalogs, Christmas has been commercialized, perhaps much more than it ought to be. Despite this, however, the glory of Christmas has not been taken away.

It still is the time of thinking of the Christ child, and of the greatest gift the world ever has received, God's gift of His Son.

It still is the time of Christmas music, worship in the churches, and joining with the angelic hosts of long ago in praising God.

It still is the time of trees and lights, of cards and packages, of greetings and cheer.

It still is the time of gathering of families, of sharing with others, and of good will to all men.

Christmas does have meaning everywhere in the world where the message of Christ has gone, and the whole Christian world will be observing the season. Nevertheless, it seems to have a special meaning in America, and all of us who live in the land, should join together now to make this the best Christmas in the entire history of our nation. It can be that if we keep Christ and His glorious love at the center of our observance.

On The MORAL SCENE...

TURNING BACK THE CLOCK—Thomas Jefferson and James Madison are probably turning over in their graves. In Fairfax County, Virginia, just a short distance down the road from George Washington's Mt. Vernon, a county judge on August 13 fined a Roman Catholic priest, the Rev. Joseph E. Gedra, \$250 for conducting a worship service in a private home. In 1972 the Fairfax County Code was amended to require religious bodies . . . to apply for special use permit in order to be granted the right to worship. The Church of the Assumption, a small independent Catholic congregation . . . applied for such a permit in 1973 and was turned down. Zoning Inspector Leonard Konecny said that "having a church there was not in keeping with the best interests of the neighborhood." The congregation, however, went on holding regular worship services in the house. Although they created no traffic, parking, or noise problems, their pastor was hauled into court and fined. An appeal is in process. . . . It is interesting that while Fairfax County's code prohibits regularly scheduled worship in homes, it does not prohibit regularly scheduled drinking parties or pornographic film parties in homes. . . . Church & State, Vol. 28, No. 9, Oct. 1975, p. 4

its bicentennial. What is the relation of the church to the state? What is the responsibility of the Christian as a citizen? What does our freedom mean? Here are thorough essays on the subjects raised, sermons on the meaning of the relationship, and actual worship services of praise and dedication.

NOW THAT YOU'RE A DEACON by Howard B. Foshee (Broadman, 136 pp., \$2.95) A fresh new book on the work of a deacon in a modern day Baptist church. Not too many books have been written on this subject and this is a welcome one. The author is director of the Church Administration Department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. In nine well written chapters he deals with the deacon's position, his relationship to the church and the pastor, and the opportunities for service, for witnessing and for magnify Christ in his ministry. Matters of stewardship, the home, the church and the denomination, and personal witnessing, are also all discussed. This book will have a long life and broad sale as it is discovered by Southern Baptist churches, pastors and the deacons themselves.

NEWEST BOOKS

HE HAS COME Compiled and edited by W. Glyn Evans (Broadman, paper, 140 pp., \$2.95) Twenty-one Christmas sermons preached by as many preachers of the past and recent years. Almost all of them have been selected from previously published volumes or used in magazines or on the radio. A fresh collection of outstanding Christmas preaching.

FROM HERE TO MATURITY by John A. Ishee (Broadman, paper, 128 pp., \$1.95) A Broadman Reader's Plan selection. Deals with various facets of Christian growth: Growing, Reflecting, Caring, Tending, Investing, Worshipping, Charting, and Sharing.

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IN THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE by Franklin M. Segler (Broadman, paper, 245 pp., \$3.95) Paperback edition of textbook on worship first published in 1967. Deals with the meaning, the means of expressing, and the actual planning and conducting of worship services.

HOW TO GET YOUR JOB DONE IN YOUR CHURCH by E. Stanley Williamson (Convention, 128 pp., paper \$2.25) Words and cartoons to tell the story of how to do church work. Deals with Sunday School, Church Training, Stewardship, and Witnessing. The cartoons and drawings are very apt and the text is pointed. A readable and helpful leadership book that is different.

ONCE SAVED . . . ALWAYS SAVED by Perry Igssiter (Broadman, paper, 96 pp., \$1.50) A clear and helpful discussion of one of the great doctrines of the Bible . . . that the person who really is saved, never can be lost. The author shows the basis of the Bible doctrine, and clearly answers those who argue against it. The book is based upon the Bible's teaching, and reveals how that this great doctrine of Baptists, and of some others, will stand every Scriptural test. The book needs to be widely read.

GOOD NEWS FROM MATTHEW by Malcolm O. Tolbert (Broadman, paper, two volumes, 248 pages each, \$3.50 each volume) An exposition of the book of Matthew, prepared for Bible students rather than scholars. The emphasis is upon the text and its message, rather than scholarly problems. Deals with sections rather than verse by verse, but does not ignore any verse. Dr. Tolbert is an outstanding scholar, but in this set, reveals his ability to bring great truth down to the level where the layman and the untrained student easily can comprehend it. A splendid commentary for teachers, laymen, and other Bible students who earnestly seek to understand the Word.

PROCLAIM LIBERTY by C. Welton Gaddy (Broadman, 154 pp., paper, \$2.95) The subtitle is "Helping churches celebrate both privilege and responsibility in the life of the nation." A most helpful volume for pastors and leaders at this hour when the nation is observing

Voices At Christmas

*I planned a lavish modern home where wealthy friends could call,
But then I heard an orphan say, "I have no home at all."
I planned to buy a bedroom suite so exquisite with charm,
But then I heard a mother pray, "Lord, keep my baby warm."
I wanted then a freezer to store my fancy food,
For mine was now old-fashioned and not the kind that stood.
Just then across the ocean came this bitter, plaintive cry:
"But I don't have a bite of food . . . please help me or I die."
I bought a car for Christmas. It was for my loved ones dear,
But then I heard an orphan cry, "I have no loved ones here."
I spent a lot of money for friends at Christmastime,
But when it came to missions, I didn't give a dime.
When Christmas was all over, I reckoned what I'd spent.
It was so vast and large a sum, I could not but repent.
For it just seemed I heard that morn a far-off mother say,
"How long ago was Jesus born to take our sins away?"
Her words began to haunt my heart, for it had grown so cold.
My children had the Gospel light but hers were still untold.
I vowed that day that I would give and work with all my might
To win a lost and dying world from sin and heathen night.
As you hear the voices, give liberally to the
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
for Foreign Missions!*

"AND THE WORD
WAS MADE FLESH
AND DWELT
AMONG US, AND
WE BEHELD HIS
GLORY, THE GLORY
AS OF THE ONLY
BEGOTTEN OF THE
FATHER, FULL OF
GRACE AND TRUTH."
— JOHN 1:14

GIFT OF GOD



Light for Living

Chester E. Swor

A Christmas Parable

SETTING: A family with whom Uncle Jim lives is planning to observe his birthday. Uncle Jim lives upstairs in a house which he has given to his relatives along with many other material gifts; in fact, he has been their greatest benefactor. They anticipate that, at his death, all of his remaining possessions will be theirs. The adults are doing the planning, interrupted by searching questions from "Little Jim." The following conversation is between his elders and Little Jim.

"It's just a week now until Uncle Jim's birthday, and we need to start planning the party, getting the refreshments lined up, and inviting the guests. Let's see: whom shall we invite?"

"Don't you think we should ask Uncle Jim whom he'd like to have at his party?" asked Little Jim.

"No. He would want to invite such a bunch of down-and-outers with whom we have nothing in common, and they'd ruin the party. We'll invite people we enjoy. Now, about the refreshments. . . ."

"Uncle Jim likes . . ."

"If you must know, Little Jim, Uncle Jim is not to be present. He goes to bed early, and our kind of party doesn't get going well much before midnight. Furthermore, Uncle Jim 'sees red' when alcoholic beverages are served, and what is a birthday party without champagne?"

"You mean, it's Uncle Jim's birthday party, but he isn't going to be present? That just doesn't make sense . . ."

"Well, Little Jim, our Uncle Jim has some of the strangest ideas: why, he's as old-fashioned as the Puritans, and we don't feel comfortable with him around when our friends are here. What's so wrong with a few raunchy stories to sparkle the conversation?"

"But, won't all the noise keep Uncle Jim awake?"

"We've arranged for him to spend the night with Cousin Sophie. They can enjoy their lavender and lace stories and play a few games of checkers. That will be better for them. And we will have his minister in for a cup of tea in the afternoon with Uncle Jim and get that chore behind us."

"But if we aren't going to invite Uncle Jim to his birthday party, aren't we going to give him a few gifts, at least?"

"We've looked after that. All of us received some things last Christmas we couldn't use or didn't want, and we're wrapping those for Uncle Jim with real sweet notes enclosed."

"I know I'm young, and you all call me 'Little Jim,' but I just don't get it: celebrating Uncle Jim's birthday according to our preferences, planning things which are offensive to Uncle Jim, but doing them on his birthday, giving him just the cast-offs of last Christmas, and sending him off to get him out of the way . . . It just doesn't add up!"

"Little Jim, everybody does it that way these days, and we don't want to be known as fanatics or squares. You'll learn as you grow up that you have to swing with the crowd if you want to be included in things."

"Happy birthday, Uncle Jim, in absentia!"

AUTHOR'S GREETING: Of course you, my readers, intelligent in head and heart, understood immediately the real meaning of the sad Christ-

THE BAPTIST FORUM

Commends Cummings Group Visit To Wyoming

Two or three matters I would like to mention:

I really enjoy reading *The Record* and thank you for providing it to our churches and pastors. I am going to enclose the names and addresses of several churches that have been added since we supplied the last list.

As you are aware, Brother Bryant Cummings brought a group of 25 pastors, missionaries, and educational directors to the state of Wyoming the week of October 25-29 to conduct Sunday School promotional meetings in the churches of that state. Immediately after this event, I was in Wyoming for a meeting with two representatives from each association, the director of associational missions, and several others. Over and over again, I heard expressions of appreciation for the good work that was performed by these men in the churches of Wyoming. I heard this talk during the meal, and recurrently at other times the topic of conversation revolved around the Sunday School meetings, the outstanding men who conducted them, the manner in which they conducted themselves in feeling out the need of the several churches, and seeking to meet them.

Bryant Cummings had led a group of men up to our area a number of times, and I simply cannot express in words our gratitude to him for the excellent way in which he prepares for these meetings and then directs the campaigns. Bryant is an outstanding leader and we deeply appreciate him and his concern for us.

May God continue to bless you and yours and prosper the Mississippi Baptist Record and the good Baptists of Mississippi.

Sincerely yours,
John P. Baker
Executive Secretary
Northern Plains
Baptist Convention
Rapid City, S.D.

mas parable; and because you love HIM whose birth celebration is so near, you know that for himself and you, the author wishes so fervently that our 1975 celebration of Christ's earth birthday season will have HIM as the real center and "star" of the celebration. So, to each of my readers, "A HAPPY CHRIST-CENTERED, CHRIST-HONORING CHRISTMAS!"

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Local Church Importance

(Continued from page 1)

South Main Baptist Church, Houston, and Peter Wagner, executive director of Fuller Evangelistic Association, Pasadena, Calif., cited the importance of the local church in evangelism.

"There's nothing like evangelism that begins and ends with the local church," Wagner said, explaining that evangelism outside the continuing support of the local congregation lacks staying power. Evangelism is never complete until the decision-maker is "folded" into the local church, he said.

He suggested six steps toward growing an evangelistic church: (1) Diagnose the health of the church; (2) Make a "faith projection" — a combination of goal setting and "possibility thinking"; (3) Know yourself — what your church's philosophy of ministry is, what it stands for, and the kind of people that make it up; (4) Mobilize the membership for growth by making maximum use of the zeal

of new converts and gift of evangelism possessed by some of the members; (5) Know your community — pinpointing homogenous units; (6) Discover and use growth methods. "People are first; methods are last," he said.

Wagner identified four types of church growth: Internal — through the regular activities of the church; Expansion — bringing people to Christ and back to the church house; Extension — moving out and forming new churches; and Bridging — planting churches in different cultures.

Wagner said that 87% of the people of the world, now unevangelized, will require bridging — the crossing of two or more language or cultural barriers to present the gospel to them.

More than 43% of American citizens today, he said, are "unmelted" and "unmeltable" in that they cling to languages other than English or to cultures usually considered "foreign." The key to evangelizing them is to present the

gospel to them in their own language and cultural setting, he said.

The church growth specialist said that a church growing at the rate of 25% per decade is experiencing "poor" growth and growth at a rate of 50% per decade is "fair." Only 100% growth in a decade — a church doubling its size — is considered good, he said. Growth at 200% is excellent, 300% outstanding and 500% "incredible," he said.

Chafin, who directed evangelism at the Home Mission Board before moving to the Houston pastorate three years ago, said there is no shortcut around the local congregation in evangelism.

"Evangelism cannot bypass the local church and have any lasting effect," he said. "Every effective crusade builds on local church involvement."

He cautioned that evangelism cannot be isolated as a separate activity in a church. "Some churches do it and grow very fast and get very famous," he said, "but they are really one-church denominations."

Chafin warned that though the local church is autonomous it must not be isolationist, and as it is strengthened it should join hands with others and reach out to the larger community.

He said some 300 churches in eight associations of churches in the Houston area were joining hands to reach their area but were starting by strengthening each local church.



"THE TWINKLING LIGHTS ON CHRISTMAS TREES are time's bright treasured memories." — Loretta Bauer Buckley

Groves of balsam trees illuminated with tiny blinking lights set the Christmas scene on Park Avenue. (Photo courtesy of the New York Convention and Visitors Bureau)

Greenery At Christmas Rooted In Tradition

By Ada T. McCool

Throughout the almost 2000 years since the birth of Christ, Christians have incorporated many pagan customs and legendary ideas into the pattern by which they plan Christmas festivities. The most notable of these is the use of the green tree brought into the home and adorned with lights and decorations.

Many legends exist about the origin of decorated trees. One of the earliest references to trimming trees at Christmas tells about a tree being set up in a village street in 1450 and trimmed with other greenery such as holly with red fruit, mistletoe with white berries and ropes of ivy decked with yellow blossoms.

In 1605 the people of Strasbourg who were under German rule brought fir trees into their homes for Christmas and decorated them with colorful paper roses, gold foil, apples, candy and cookies.

The custom of the Christmas tree spread rapidly throughout Germany thence, to other European countries by way of German-speaking people until it found its way into Rome, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and then into England. The royal family at Windsor Castle, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, popularized the Christmas tree custom when they had a fir tree brought into the house and trimmed after the birth of their son in 1840.

There is strong belief that the Hessian soldiers who came to America during the Revolution 1776-1783 introduced the Christmas tree to American colonies. Other sources say that the green tree for Christmas decoration was brought to the United States by Charles Follen, a German professor at Harvard who provided a

tree for his son each year beginning at Christmas 1832.

Wherever and whenever the custom began of using Christmas trees in the United States it has grown in popularity each year until the growing and selling of Christmas trees has become a profitable business representing above fifty million dollars annually.

The most commonly used trees in the United States for Christmas are fir, cedar and pine. For many years the fir, abies genus, has been the favorite Christmas tree for many people. Legend states that the fir tree is the tree of life having bloomed and fruited freely until Eve partook of its fruit whereupon its foliage closed only to be revived at Christ's birth when it began to blossom again.

Many people prefer the cedar

tree to decorate for Christmas because of its dense foliage and its ability to stay fresh and green for a long period after being cut. The deodar cedar, *C. deodar*, called "the tree of God" by Hindus, grows in a pyramidal shape with foliage varying in color from bluish green to silver.

Pine is the common name applied to genus *pinus* of the family *pinaceae*. The pine family consisting of around 200 species is native to most parts of the world. Its long dark green needle-like foliage makes it popular for Christmas trees as well as for use in making other decorations to be used throughout the house. Legend says that because of the pine's grief at not having a suitable gift for the Christ Child, God sent stars to rest upon its branches, causing a radiance that made

the Baby raise His arms toward the tree. Ever since that eventful night the pine's brilliant foliage brings memories of the light that it shed upon the Christ Child.

After over a century of use the conventional green Christmas tree holds top priority over the artificially made, and the paint sprayed types that have no symbolic relation to the occasion. Nearly 80% of the Christmas trees are obtained from natural woodlands and pastures. The remainder are produced on plantations or Christmas tree farms where more than 200,000 acres are devoted to the production of this important crop. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's keen interest in growing trees for holiday use at his Hyde Park place in New York caused many owners

of small acreage to pursue this trade as a commercial hobby.

Ingenious decorators also make use of many other types of greenery to carry the color scheme throughout the house.

The use of native greenery to decorate the home at Christmas is a tradition that has become rooted deeply in the hearts of all peoples.



"AWAY IN A MANGER, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus lay down his sweet head." — (Photo from CHRISTMAS, AN AMERICAN ANNUAL OF CHRISTMAS LITERATURE AND ART, VOLUME 28, Augsburg Publishing House)

No Room For Him In The Den

By Ruby K. Poole

I have always been just a little kin to Rip Van Winkle when it came to sleeping. But for some reason one morning, I found myself wide awake at 2 a.m. I was unable to go back to sleep, but to my surprise, I was not annoyed by my insomnia.

For several weeks I had felt a tremendous burden to pray for other people in need, as well as for myself. I quietly slipped out of bed and went to the den: a few moments later I was on my knees praying. I attend a Bible study and prayer group meeting once a month. During the prayer time a list is made of the prayer requests. The last time we met I was so deeply touched that I promised God I'd keep the list nearby and pray daily for these needs. I had not missed a single day, and now God was asking me to pray before dawn. I was a little shocked at first but later became elated by the idea of praying at such a quiet and peaceful time.

Several years ago a friend's four-year-old son wanted her to read the Christmas story to him as

she had done many times before. He listened very intently once again. When she began to read the sentence, "There was no room for Him in the inn," he blurted out ahead of her, "And there was no room for Him in the den."

With the words of the little boy echoing in my mind, I finally got up from my knees and sat on the couch. Looking around the den, I noticed first the beautiful colored TV, a present from my son a few years ago. I have enjoyed it very much and thanked God for a son so thoughtful and generous. Next I looked at the lovely African violets on a table nearby, and marveled at the handiwork of God. Finally my eyes turned toward a picture on the wall. Entitled "The Church In The Wildwood," it had been made by a friend and given to me at Christmas.

Thinking of this and other dens, I found myself on my knees again, this time praying that all mankind would make room for our Lord Jesus in the dens of their hearts, especially as we approach the holy Christmas season.

A Song Of Christmas

When church bells ring out on Christmas Eve
I sing—praising the child born in Bethlehem
while shepherds watched their woolly sheep
as a great white star shone,
moved in the dark sky
and angels sang joyful tidings
Of "Peace on earth,
Good will to men."

When church bells ring out on Christmas Eve
I sing—praising our Father who robed His Son
in human flesh—the precious love-gift
for all people,
"a Saviour
which is Christ the Lord."

When church bells ring out on Christmas Eve
I sing—praising Jesus who lived on this earth
healed the sick, taught multitudes,
forgave sinners, died on the cross
to redeem our souls.

When church bells ring out on Christmas Eve
I sing—praising Jesus, babe of the manger,
son of Joseph and Mary,
eternal King of heaven,
Lord of my heart!

—Eunice Barnes

I Heard The Bells

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play;
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



SCRAPBOOK



The Christmas Mistake

I had planned to cook a lavish turkey dinner,
But that man had to work on Christmas Day, and as a lark
I agreed to keep him company at the office,
On the promise of a Christmas dinner out after dark.

A Texas norther blew in snow, and his car refused to start, after work.
It grew dark. No taxi would come, and all the restaurants were closed.
Stupidly hungry we ate hot dogs complete with chile and onions
At a counter. The simple food warmed me, but all tradition froze.

We walked out upon a strange carpet of snow.
I stumbled to match his mood, grimly to laugh or cry,
As I mourned for Christmas dinner. Was the error mine or his?
Tardily the moon looked down in brief splendor, high.

Running clouds rumbled a vastly white city.
I felt his ruggedly handsome face touch my snow-flecked hair,
And suddenly this tall man, with oft-hidden baritone,
Began to sing, "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas. . . ." And there

Before us lay a vision of starkly real, molded snow,
The moody moon got lost behind the clouds' paces.
At one with God, we walked, and his rich male voice flowed on.
Playful flakes of snow returned and teased our bare faces.

As though in premonition, I knew why Jesus came —
That we might bear life's loveliness to a gentler world,
With all our earthy sins forgiven.
Released of inhibition, while snowflakes whirled.

The man sang, "Silent night! Holy night. . ."
And all the houses behind the little yards sat winter quiet,
Listening, until finally we entered the warmth of our own doorway,
Even now, I find joy alone to remember that Christmas night.

—Violet Tackett

The Love Of The Lord

May the Love of the Lord light up your home this Christmas
And your hearts be warmed as the hearth before the fire.—M.E.

What Can I Give?

Angels and archangels
May have gathered there
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air,
But only his mother
In her maiden bliss
Worshiped the Beloved
With a kiss.

What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a Wise Man,
I would do my part—
Yet what I can I give him,
Give my heart.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

How Shall We Remember Him?

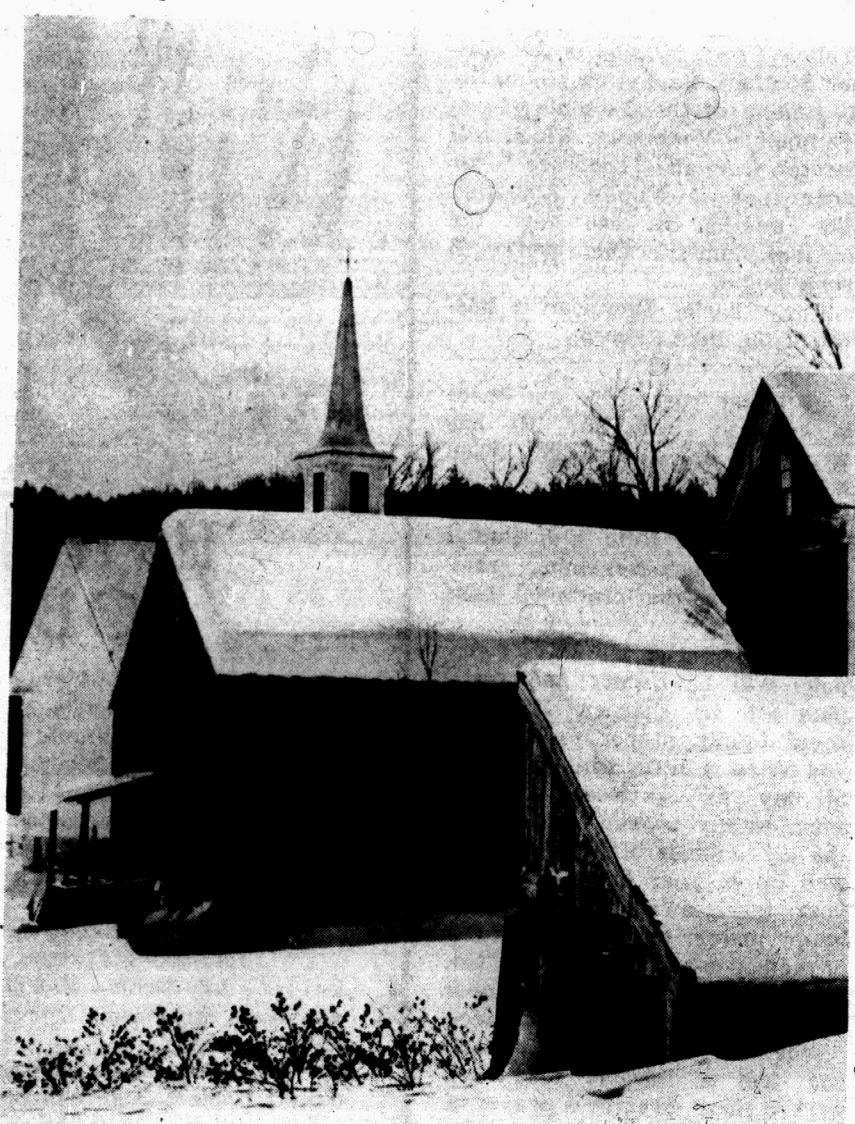
It is within
His death
We understand
our worth
It is within
His death
we understand
His Birth

Christmas is
not a manger
but the mount
not a cradle but
a cross
not the shepherds
but the priest
not peace but suffering

The symbols
of Christmas are not
the gifts, the tree
or the lights
but — the broken bread
and Warm, Warm red wine

When Jesus said "remember me —
He spoke of His death — not His birth."

—Jerry Mixon



BLANKETS OF SNOW, like covers of books, insulate these pitched roofs. —(RNS Photo)

The Fairest Flower

At Christmas time we think
Of flowers bright and gay
On tables and on mantel shelf.
Everywhere's a bouquet

But let us look beyond
The beauty they disclose
And see the One who is
Each petal of each rose



God sent his Son-Flower
And laid Him in a manger bed
That Holy Christmas night
Out in a cattle shed

The Fairest of them all:
Lily-of-the-Valley
Rose-of-Sharon, too
And Tree-of-Calvary

He healed a man by the pool
With leaves a crowd he fed
He calmed a storm at sea
And raised some who were dead

Then in a garden alone
With flowers touched by dew
He prayed, "Thy will be done"
His cup — for me and you

—Victoria Singley

Farrow Manor: New Village Ministry

(Continued From Page 3)

children's Village and mail or send them to our home offices at P. O. Box 11308, Jackson, Mississippi, 39213. We have no office facilities on the Farrow Manor Campus for handling, banking, disbursing and acknowledging cash gifts. All bonded administrative personnel serve the Farrow Manor campus from our Jackson offices. Your designated instructions which accompany a cash gift will be faithfully followed.

2. Please allow our Jackson offices to assist you in your sponsorship interests by keeping records of your name and address; the identity of the child you wish to sponsor; and the precise area which you intend to assist the child. We keep extensive records in our Jackson offices with respect to all such matters.

3. We do understand the sincere desire of some individuals to be personally identified and involved with a named and known individual child. We will honor that desire to the maximum of our ability. Therefore, sponsors may take children shopping for their needs or purchase those needs and mail or deliver same to the child personally on our Farrow Manor campus.

4. Interested individuals may sponsor one or more of our children, on the Farrow Manor campus, on the Jackson campus or in our New Albany "Satellite Home" by furnishing the child's cash spending allowance, his lunch fund needs, and - or his Christmas and birthday gift needs. Our Jackson offices will be delighted to furnish further information on request.

5. As friends consider the matter of visiting with or upon Village children at the Farrow Manor Campus, and the best interests of these Village children and the best interests of your own home and family, we respectfully ask you to remember and consider that: group, campus-life must be structured along guidelines which are designed to promote the best interests of the group. This fact is especially noteworthy in the matter of children's visiting privileges. Thus, our staff may not always be able to cooperate with off-campus friends; in their visiting interests, precisely as those friends may prefer. We beg your patience and understanding, as we request that you contact our Farrow Manor Campus Home Life Director, David C. Foster, before finalizing

your visiting plans.

Our resident home life director on the Farrow Manor Campus, as stated above, is David C. Foster. His telephone number is 233-2155. He will be pleased to have you call or visit him for any purpose. You are urged to call us in Jackson at 922-2242 or write our Jackson Office at Box 11308 Jackson, Mississippi, 39213. Our beginnings in Tate County, at this time, and for the foreseeable future, are so modest we cannot afford an office staff there. Thus, all financing, including the handling and disbursing of all gifts of money; all correspondence; all Social Service (special casework) matters and all major administrative details will be handled from the Jackson offices. We are organized, staffed and ready to service your need in a more prompt and efficient fashion from the Jackson offices and we again encourage you to direct your questions, comments and suggestions, along with your financial support to our Jackson address.

What Can We Give Him? Give Him Ourselves

By Bill Duncan
Matt. 2:1-23

Christmas is a time for giving. The wise men brought their best. But Christ showed that the gift of self

Will out-give all the rest.

—Fred Bauer
Gracious giving requires no special talent, nor large amounts of money. It is compounded of the heart and the head acting together toward the perfect means of expressing our feelings. It is love sharpened with imagination. Emerson said, "The only gift is a portion of thyself."

A little girl whose pennies did

not add up to enough for what she considered a suitable present for her mother gave her several small boxes tied with bright ribbons. Inside each were slips of paper on which the child had printed, "Good for two flower-bed weeding," "Good for three batches of cookies for your bridge club," "Good for two floor scrubbing." She had never read Emerson, but unconsciously she put a large part of her small self into her gift.

A minister soliciting for a worthy cause was turned down by a well-to-do business man.

With a curt letter which ended,

"As far as I can see, this Christian business is one continuous give, give, give." The clergyman wrote back, thank you for the best definition of the Christian life I have ever heard. After the most successful gift is a spontaneous one. Act while the impulse is fresh. Take full advantage of the thrill of the surprise — giving of yourself knows no special days.

Giving gifts at Christmas is often related to the act of the Magi in bringing their gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the baby Jesus. The story of the visiting Wise Men gives basis for a study of giving and worship.

If one seeks the best example of giving at Christmas, he must turn to the idea that "God gave." He gave his only begotten Son. This is the highest expression of

giving that makes love visible. His giving grew out of his love. This kind of love has the effect of producing the same kind of love in the recipient.

After reading of God's love gift and the story of the wise men we are forced to consider the questions: What can I give to Jesus? How can I give it to Him?

The question of why we give will help us justify the right gift. Many people over-give because they are attempting to overcome a sense of guilt. Many people under-give because their gift presents an act of duty or custom. Many people measure their gift by size or excessive cost, because of their insecurity. Many people try to win favor by their gifts. Most should give out of gratitude or in response to an act or relationship of love that never can be repaid. A genuine expression of appreciation can be symbolized in a gift.

When God looks down upon the heart, He speaks of the motive as being more important than the gift. Please look at the "why."

It was in Bethlehem; David's city, that the Jews expected David's greater Son to be born. It was there that they expected God's anointed one to come into the world, and it was so.

The wise men's inquiry about the one born King of the Jews was enough to send Herod into a fit of suspicion, fear, and jealousy. The word "born" was a participle with adjectival force. The question asked by the Magi was, "Where is the born king of the Jews?" Herod became king by

intrigue, maneuver, Roman appointment and the constant use of the sword to eliminate rivals. Family, friends and enemies were victims of the cruel and unpredictable king. When the king got upset, no life was safe.

Herod was interested in the appearance of the star. This has been explained by nature many ways. But it was a unique star which marked the birth of Jesus Christ. The word Magi describes a priestly caste among the Medes, later recognized as teachers of religion and science with special interest in astrology and medicine.

The zeal of these foreigners in searching for Jesus, their joy over finding him, and the worship they gave him contrasts with the indifference and later hostility of his own people.

The Wise Men followed the star until it led them to Bethlehem. The New Testament does not say there were three but there was a threefold gift presented to Jesus. It was a custom that no one could ever approach the king without a gift. The gifts presented were gold, frankincense and myrrh. They presented their gifts and bowed down and worshipped Him. Before we can be friends with Christ, we must submit to Christ. He must be King of our lives.

Gold for a king, frankincense for a priest, myrrh for one who was to die — these were the gifts of the Wise Men, and even at the cradle of Christ, they foretold that He was to be the true King, the perfect High Priest and in the end the supreme Saviour of men.

Names In The News

Tuckers Crossing Church, Jones County, has presented pins and bars for perfect attendance over five years in Sunday School, to the following: Sherry Padgett, Terry Padgett, Mrs. Dan Josey, 7 years; Karen Padgett, 9 years; Lavelle Nicholson is the Sunday School Director and the Rev. B. Aaron Foy is pastor.

Rev. G. A. McCoy, pastor of Union Church, Picayune, and Jimmy Walley, minister of music at the same church, celebrated their birthdays on the same date — Friday, December 5.

Dr. John Lee Taylor, pastor, First, Grenada, is author of the article, "Designs for Direction", in the December, 1975 issue of *The Commission*. The article appearing in the SBC's foreign mission journal deals with counseling guidance of the person sensing God's call to a church-related vocation.



A Woman's World Reaches For
Beyond the Ironing Board

—Wilda Fancher

(Reprinted from "The Last Word, A Woman's Privilege" by Wilda Fancher, December 24, 1972, by request.)

This week a beautiful letter came, saying, after telling me the circumstances of the death of their nineteen-year-old son last spring, "Could you write a column for all of the people who have lost loved ones this year? Our home is sad and our holiday will be lonely."

Death has not walked so close to me that brother, sister, parent, child, or husband joined him as he passed. He has seemed to hover over each of our boys, in turn, so I have fought back and struggled against the possibility of death. Only to that fullness of understanding am I able to sympathize with people grieving through the death experience. In all my years as a pastor's wife, I never learned what to say or how to act in the presence of death-grief.

Now I hardly know what to write. If I knew words which could be caressing and tender to reach into your heart like finger tips and massage away the pain which must be a million times worse than muscle cramps, I would write them.

If I knew words which could keep your breath from backing up into your throat when you have to pick up a plate because you forgot and set the table for everyone, I would write them.

If I knew words which would keep the tears from dropping onto your coat when you see someone at a distance who looks like him, I would write them.

If I knew words that could keep everybody from walking or whispering or running or talking like he did, I would write them.

If I knew words which would make it easier for you to swallow his favorite food, or hear his favorite song, or walk into his room, or give away his possessions, I would write them.

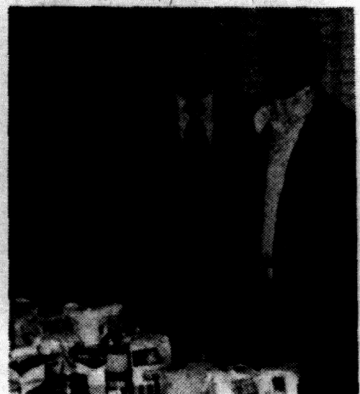
But if I knew all these words, and I wrote them, and they did what I said they would do, I would have robbed you, for I would have taken away your memories of him.

Next to live music, a record is the best thing; next to a live person, memories are the best thing. Without the music there could have been no record; without the person there would be no memories. Like music with joyful strains suddenly replaced by haunting melodies, and like music with haunting melodies suddenly replaced by joyful strains, your relationship goes on every day.

If James dies before I do, probably the most difficult time of day for me will be the time when



OFF TO HOLY LAND: William Carey College Bible professor Dr. William Clawson points out a place of interest in Israel to which he and several of his students will be going December 24. Getting excited about their prospective study tour are, from left, Danny Stringer of Laurel and Bruce Worrell of Ackerman.



Rev. and Mrs. Charles Farmer, pastor and wife at Calvary, Booneville, are recipients of a pounding from church members on November 26. The event was held in the newly redecorated education building.

Rev. Derle Underwood, formerly a member of West Jackson Church, Jackson, has joined the Pastoral Care Department of Louisville Baptist Hospital in Louisville, Ky. The son of Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Underwood of Jackson, he is married to the former Marilyn Huffman of Greenwood. He is serving as a staff chaplain intern at Baptist East Hospital. He is a graduate of Mississippi College and Southern Seminary.

"Revival Afterglow" Follows Conference On Revival

"Pearl River churches experienced a revival when Rev. Jack R. Taylor and Rev. Bill Stafford preached in the Conference on Revival," states Rev. Bill Duncan, pastor of First, Picayune. "The churches that participated have seen a great change in the spirit and the life of the churches. The worship services, in each individual church, have shown evidence of revival."

The conference began with a great crowd of 1500 that gathered in a thunderstorm on Sunday evening. During the week, over

10% of the population of Picayune attended the most unusual services with two sermons, congregational singing, and special music brought by Mrs. Patsy Sewell of Dallas, Texas.

As a result, the church members asked that the team return December 14, 15, and 16 for a Revival Afterglow to continue the revival. There was another mass meeting of the churches on Sunday evening, December 14, at 7 p.m. Rev. Jack Taylor and Rev. Bill Stafford both spoke in each service. There were also day time services on Monday and Tuesday.

Iuka Church To Deliver Hot Meals To Shut-Ins

The Iuka Church will deliver a hot meal to each of their shut-ins on December 22, as a part of their continual mission outreach.

During the summer the church also sponsors outreach ministries at J. P. Coleman State Park and Mill Creek Resort.

Yellow Creek Mission is a permanent part of the mission program of the church. Their services are held each Sunday by the Iuka associate pastor Stanley Magill. The Yellow Creek Mission is the closest Southern Baptist church to the beginning of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, which will stretch from the Tennessee River near Iuka to Mobile, Alabama. The mission is also near the nuclear plant site where work will soon begin.

Rev. Charles Dampier is pastor of the Iuka Church.

I go to the post office and there is no letter from him. He has written to me almost daily when he is away. But I will, for a while, I'm sure, go home and read some of the letters from him that I have saved and remember gratefully the love that prompted those letters.

On this Christmas Day, every ache will be deeper and every pain will be sharper. It would seem totally proper to me that you weep a little while, but not all day. As you weep, it would seem totally proper, also, to let the joyful strain of faith in Christ well up in your heart and wipe your tears away with poignant happy memories. Bring out a few of the not-so-happy memories, too, for it is unrealistic to remember someone as having been perfect.

When your heart has settled and you feel a miracle has been worked there, breathe a prayer of thanks to God for it is a miracle, indeed — this Christ in Christmas, whose "peace on earth" includes your heart, even on this first Christmas with one missing.

Foreign Mission Board REPORTS

FOREIGN MISSIONS INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW



'TIS THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY

It's difficult to be jolly when your stomach is empty and your life even emptier. But hundreds of millions of people find themselves in that situation this Christmas season.

During 1975, Southern Baptists have given more than \$1.5 million through the Foreign Mission Board to help alleviate hunger and other physical needs in countries where our missionaries serve. This tremendous outpouring of Christian concern and compassion is greatly appreciated, and thousands of people are benefiting from this expression of love.

But the needs continue.

For millions of people, world hunger is not a seasonal problem, but a daily dilemma. Your gifts help your missionaries continue a developing world hunger ministry as a part of their basic spiritual ministry.

For more information about the uses of your world relief contributions write W. Eugene Grubbs at the Foreign Mission Board.



Foreign Mission Board, SBC
P.O. Box 6597
Richmond, Virginia 23230

In Search Of The King

By Wm. J. Fallis

Matthew 1:18 to 2:23

Christmas will be here in just a few days. What will it mean for you this time? Long ago you relinquished the high anticipations about what you might receive. In their place you have enjoyed the warm satisfactions of giving to others, and that is good. Surely, Christmas must be more than what many have made of it — a festival of pleasure and indulgence. For many it represents the continuing search for the King. Some have never found him. Others have made a commitment but it seems tentative and unsatisfying. Still others keep coming to Christmas with expectant hearts, knowing that the King wants to control other areas of experience and influence attitudes and decisions in family life, politics, and business.

The Lesson Explained
Eastern Magi Ask For Direction Verses 1-3

Without telling anything about Jesus' birth, Matthew just begins this chapter with the fact of his birth and proceeds with an unusual story related to the birth. The Wise Men were called magoi

in Greek, which became Magi in English and is the root of our word "magic." But these men were not magicians in the popular sense of the word; they were men who studied the stars, interpreted dreams, and were the intellectuals of their country.

In their Eastern country — Arabia, Mesopotamia, or another — these men had seen a star, evidently in the western sky; and they interpreted it as the sign of a new king for the Jews. They had come to pay homage to him.

It seems strange that Herod would be so upset about a baby, but he was not a normal king. Twenty years after the Romans took control of Palestine, they declared Herod its king, and he reigned for thirty-three years. Although ambitious and capable, he was sensual and cruel. He distributed many people and feared assassination. Because the query from the Wise Men seemed to reveal a new threat, he and all the city were upset.

Priests Point To Bethlehem
Verses 4-10

Herod's parents were converts to Judaism, and his concern for it was more political than religious.

But he turned to the chief priests and scribes for an answer to the Magi. They agreed that Bethlehem was the predicted birthplace because of a verse in Micah 5:2. After all, that village was David's home, and the Messiah was to be of David's line. The last clause as Matthew quotes it is different from the Micah verse; it may have been borrowed from 2 Samuel 5:2. The word "rule" is better translated "govern" or literally "to shepherd." Matthew knew Jesus to be that kind of ruler.

Herod answered the Magi in private and asked when they had first seen the star. In that way he hoped to learn when the child had been born; in verse 16 we learn that it must have been within the previous two years. Then the king urged the visitors to find the child in Bethlehem and report to him.

When the Wise Men turned southward to Bethlehem, the unusual star was there to guide them. It could have been a conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn which occurred in 7 B.C., but the Greek word means star and not constellation.

Royal Gifts For The Child
Verses 11-12

The Greek word for "child" means that Jesus was more than a newborn baby when the Wise Men came. Matthew says nothing about the visitors being kings, but their gifts were fit for a king. Frankincense and myrrh were gums used for perfume, and myrrh was also used for medicine and embalming. With gold, they were significant gifts. So, these men who knew little or nothing about the Jewish faith traveled probably hundreds of miles to see a Jewish child and pay homage to him with costly treasure. They responded to some inner call which Herod could not hear.

God saw to it that in their joy, the Wise Men did not innocently report their find to Herod.

PEACE: A mind quieted in silence, undisturbed by outside strife; eyes that see beauty, ears that listen to others; voice that sings praise; heart filled with love; body moved by rhythm; soul expressed through music; conscience led by dictates of the Holy Spirit; a human being in harmony with nature, content with his lot to live in agreement. This is peace. — Jewelle Allison



THE ADORATION — By Jane Palermo (American, 1957-)—RNS Photo.



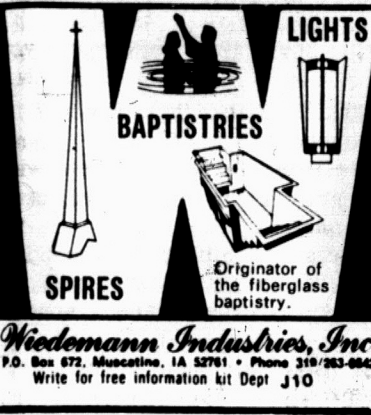
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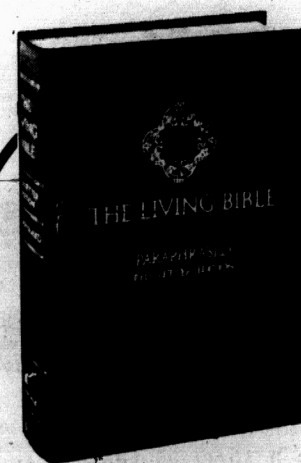
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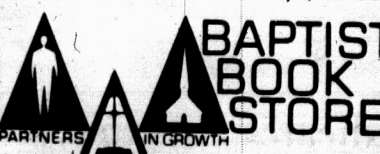
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Thursday, December 18, 1975



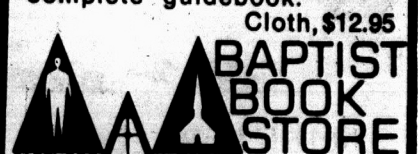
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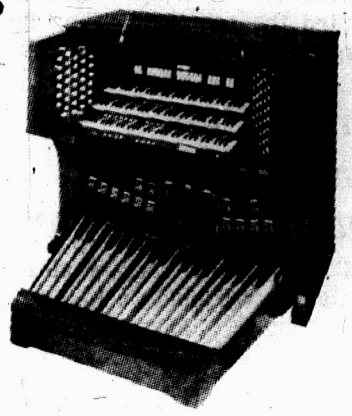
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Calvary, Smithdale, To Build Sanctuary

Calvary, Smithdale, on Nov. 9 participated in ground breaking ceremonies for a new building. In addition to a spacious sanctuary, the building will provide space for a nursery, pastor's study, and two choir robing rooms. Building Committee chairman is David Wicker. Rev. Allen Parnell is pastor.



Bethlehem (Scott) Dedicates Sanctuary

Bethlehem (Scott) has dedicated their new sanctuary. The church participated in "Together We Build" and reached their goal of \$30,000 in pledges and cash donations. To complete the year, they will have new pulpit furniture, choir robes, chimes, and a new church sign. James Edwards, pastor, expresses his joy in the blessings that the Lord has bestowed upon their church since December 1974 when he accepted the pastorate. They have not only been blessed materially but spiritually as well, with eight professions of faith, he reports.

Byram Wins Banner At Hinds-Madison "M" Night

"M" Night for Hinds-Madison Association was held at Robinson Street Church, Jackson, on November 25. More than 800 were present.

Byram Church, with the highest attendance of 259, received the High Attendance Banner, and Rockie Bennett was crowned Miss "M" Night Queen from Byram Church. Byram Church also received the two Children's trophies for having the highest attendance of 141. Lone Pine Church received the highest Percentage Banner, with eight present of an enrollment of four, which was 200%.

Rev. Fred Tarpley is director of missions of Hinds-Madison.

A clear conscience is the one luxury everyone can afford.

Concord Deacon Dies At 88

Funeral services for Clarence Eugene Arnold, Sr., 88, of Route 2, McCall Creek, were held November 16 at 4 p.m. from Concord Church. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Mr. Arnold, resident of McCall Creek and a native of Jefferson County, was born August 25, 1887. He died Saturday, November 15, at Kings Daughters Hospital, Brookhaven.

A retired barber, he was a deacon at Concord Church, and was also a Mason. His pastor, Rev. James Jackson, officiated at the funeral, assisted by Rev. Wiley Reid.

Survivors include his wife, Velma Burris Arnold; two sons, Clarence Eugene Arnold, Jr., of Glen Allen, and Duncan Foster Arnold of Bay St. Louis; one brother; and nine grandchildren.



Wanilla Burns Pastorium Note

Wanilla Church of Monticello burned the note on their new pastorium November 16. The all-electric home has three bedrooms, two baths, living room, dining area, kitchen and double carport. Rev. Ralph Cranford, pastor, with his family Billy Jean, Ralph, Jr., and Sissy moved to Wanilla in September.

Clark Rakestraw Completes 35th Year In The Pastorate

Rev. Clark Rakestraw of Blue Springs has completed 35 years in the pastorate. Since 1967 he has been pastor of Center Church, Union County.

He began in 1940 at Pheba in Clay County when it was a half time church. He was pastor of Hendersonville in the same county, preaching at 2 p.m., also at Cedar Bluff at 3 p.m., and back to Pheba at 7 p.m. "I was driving 110 miles," he says, "at a salary of \$35.00 weekly or \$70.00 monthly."

"In these 35 years," Mr. Rakestraw reports, "I've worn out one man and one woman, 17 automobiles driven over 700,000 miles, never preached a trial sermon, and never left a church in debt. I'm not trying to claim any credit. It has been the good people I have worked with, including all my preacher friends."

In 1943 Ellistown Church, where he grew up as a boy, called him as pastor.

He says, "About this time I left Clay County (but was still pastor at Ellistown) and accepted Falkner Church in Tippah County. This had been a fourth time church, but they went to half time. I served these fine people about five years, then came to Wallerville in Union County. This was the church that licensed and ordained me under Dr. Tyler. Also about this time I served Center Church as a pinch-hitter,

as they were without a pastor."

While he was pastor of Ellistown and Falkner, he was also pastor for Beech Springs and Christian Rest in Union County.

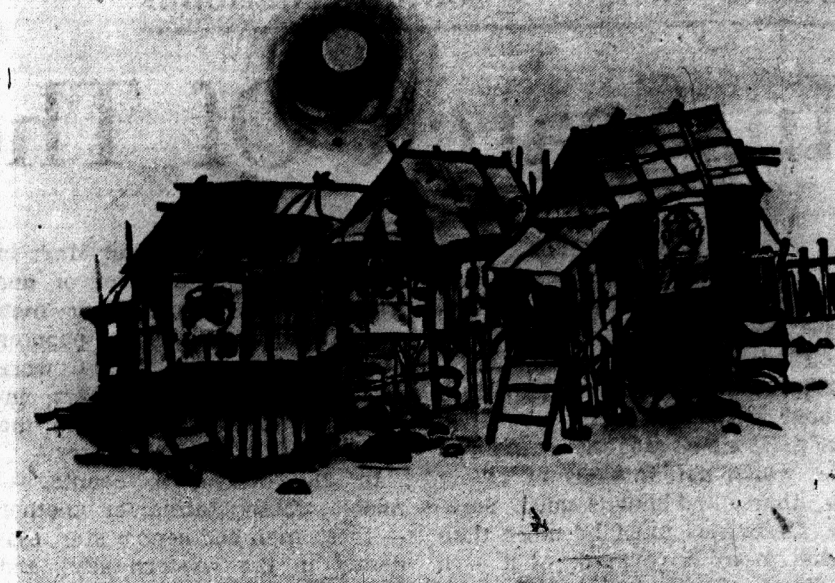
After leaving Falkner, he moved to Fellowship in Tippah County where he served seven years. At this time Ellistown went to a full-time program. They had ground breaking services at Ellistown March 16, 1958, for a new building which was erected and paid for.

Mr. Rakestraw resigned Ellistown in 1964, after 21 years, thinking they needed younger leadership.

Leaving Ellistown, he went to Liberty in Union County and led them in a building program and into a full time program. After the church constructed a building, they bought an organ and then dedicated these both debt free.

In 1967 he again became pastor at Center and says he has just finished there "eight" of the best years of my life. "During this eight years, Center has built a \$22,000 education building, a \$20,000 pastor's home, bought a \$3400 organ, a \$1,000 piano, and \$1,000 worth of pew pads, totaling \$47,000 in improvements. This was above the church regular budget with mission giving the highest ever.

Mr. Rakestraw says, "Please pray for me as I finish the battle!"



POOR CHILDREN IN THE PHILIPPINES, devoid of snow and elaborate Yule trees have their own way of expressing happiness at Christmastime. Their homes, often on stilts, are decorated with colorful lanterns, called "parols." That is the subject of this painting, entitled "Christmas For The Poor," by 13-year-old Yictorio Ballita, which won a merit award in the Christian Children's Fund International Children's Art Competition. — (RNS Photo)

Devotional

Preparing For Christmas

By Joe Abrams, Clinton

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:11).

Our opening thought is that God, the first One to prepare for Christmas, did so by first preparing for Christ. Surely that should be our procedure—prepare for Christmas by first preparing for Christ. We will not be ready for Christmas until we have first made ready through Christ. For without Christ there would be no Christmas.

Many people prepare for Christmas in a material way only, not realizing that this most celebrated day in Christendom has both a spiritual and material meaning, with the spiritual being by far the more important.

The shepherds, who heard the "good news" first, prepared for Christmas by expressing immediate and joyful anticipation.

"Let us now go... and see." We can see their eagerness for Christmas by their being eager to see the Christ child. We should be just as anxious to put Christ first in our Christmas. There are indications that the shepherds left what they were doing when the announcement came to them.

Because of their faith and obedience they found Him, as they had been told by the angels. Our faith and obedience will also be rewarded at this great season if we follow the example of the shepherds.

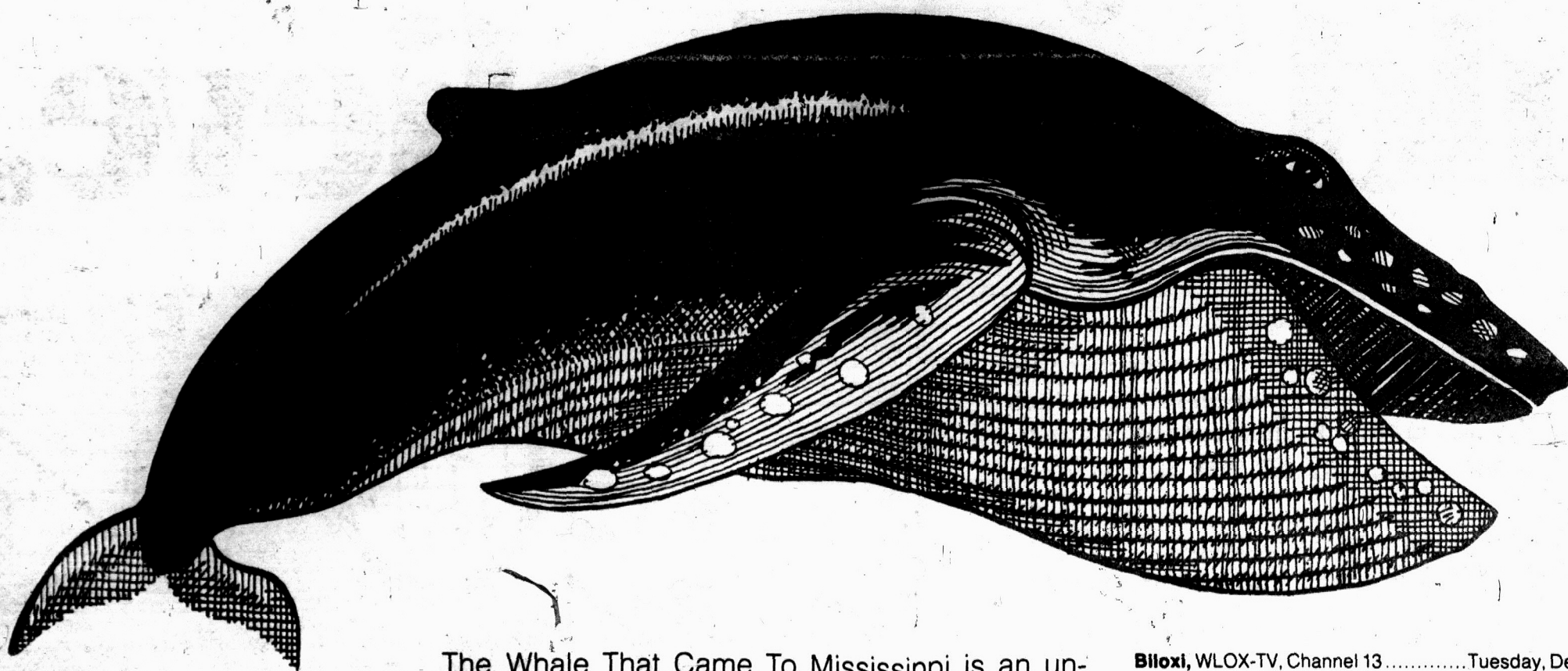
When the shepherds saw Mary and Joseph and the Christ child they "made known abroad" what they had witnessed. They could not keep it — they had to tell it to others. That is truly preparing for Christmas!

Finally, the shepherds returned, "glorifying and praising God." That is ever the procedure. Those who tell others the good news will return, glorifying and praising God.

The shepherds returned "home." We would do the same today, and conclude our praising God by going to church, the institution the Christ child gave his followers after He began His earthly ministry.



The Whale That Came To Mississippi



The Whale That Came To Mississippi is an unlikely title for an enlightening program about the work of the Southern Baptists in Mississippi.

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Columbus, WCBI-TV, Channel 4 Monday, December 22 7:30-8:00 p.m.
Greenwood/Greenville,
WABG-TV, Channel 6 Wednesday, December 24 7:00-7:30 p.m.
Hattiesburg, WDAM-TV, Channel 7 Thursday, December 25 7:30-8:00 p.m.
Jackson, WAPT-TV, Channel 16 Tuesday, December 23 7:00-7:30 p.m.
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